

## **Public Town Hall on Government Reform and Restructuring South Hill, Virginia**

Southside Planning District Office

July 19 2010-1:00-2:30 PM

### Opening:

Senator Lucas called the meeting to order at 1:05. Mayor Earle Horne welcomed meeting attendees to South Hill. Senator Lucas asked the commission members and commission staff present to introduce themselves. Mr. Estes, Delegate Ware, Senator Lucas and Mr. Bruning introduced themselves. Mr. Bruning outlined the goals of the commission and gave an overview of its members. Senator Lucas spoke of the importance of public input and opened the floor to the public.

### Comments:

- A commenter said cities and counties are split and have different criteria for economic development receipts when they need to have uniform criteria.
- Kim Callis said there needs to be flexibility of state rules and regulations for urban and rural areas.
- Bill Robertson said co-land use regulations should have more flexibility at the local level.
- George Nestor said the state should examine the cost of mandates before they are put on localities.
- Joyce French said planning district commissions need to be used more as regional organizers instead of partnered state and local agencies.
- Charlotte Woolridge emphasized the need for flexibility of regulations for urban and rural areas.
- Jimmy Gillie said the department of taxation should partner more with local commissioners of revenue on: business registration, sales and meals tax and audits, and added that DMV selects should be expanded and that the Department of Occupational Regulation should communicate more with local governments on contract licensing.
- Randy Arno said the state should encourage regional co-operation between localities to achieve more efficient delivery of services.
- Scott Miller suggested allowing local treasures help collect delinquent state taxes instead of using private collection agencies.
- Woody Harris presented a plan for prosperity for distressed rural localities, and asked that the state not pass costs off to localities and call it savings.
- Senator Frank Ruff said rural Virginia continues to fall behind the rest of the state which results in costs in transfer payments and an exodus to cities, and added that budgets should be based on pressing issues not on the last fiscal year's spending.
- Glenn Sink said that critical mass is crucial and that the state should examine the Virginia rural center brochure and report.
- John Kines said there needs to be a formalized communication structure between local officials and state department heads.
- Delegate Wright said that rural areas under stress could not afford more unfunded mandates from the state.
- Scott Miller said the goal of the commission was turning back to taxpayers.
- Robert Pecht recommended talking to the Philpot manufacturing program regarding process improvement projects.

- Tucker Watkins said if a county issues a map the state shouldn't also print one and suggested the forestry department and VDOT should work together on state vehicle maintenance
- Mike Smith suggested outsourcing map production and creating regional maps which could sell ads on them.
- Marshall Ecker said constitutional officers need to be utilized better or eliminated, localities need to be able to opt out of some mandates and added some local VDOT offices were closed and not addressing problems.
- A commenter said the state can't put too many unfunded mandates on the localities and that planning organizations should be split.
- Kim Callis said to grant local agencies more freedom as uniform solutions don't work.
- A commenter said the state needed to quit getting agencies to come after localities to issue fees.
- A commenter suggested abolishing the gas tax and adding road maintenance fees.
- A commenter said commission staff needed to be brought through Virginia to see what was being cut.
- A commenter said the state should help accelerate access to the internet in rural areas.
- Mayor Horn said the commission needs to see that recommendations are implemented.

### Closing

Mr. Estes said access of capital to business was critical and must be encouraged and that the state should look at unfunded mandates on localities. Mr. Bruning announced the meeting of the full commission in Richmond on Tuesday July 20<sup>th</sup>. Senator Lucas close the meeting at 2:30.